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EDITOR R.PALME DUTT

LABOUR MONTHLY

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The Editor
TUC Battlefield

Alan Fisher
Trade Unions and the Labour Party

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The Pentonville Five

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LABOUR MONTHLY

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Notes of the Month

TUC BATTLEFIELD

> **'As for ourselves, in view of our whole past there is only one path open to us. For almost forty years we have stressed the class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat as the great lever of the modern social revolution; it is, therefore, impossible for us to co-operate with people who wish to expunge this class struggle from the movement. When the International was formed we expressly formulated the battlecry: The emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself.'**
>
> MARX and ENGELS, Circular Letter to A. Bebel, W. Liebknecht, W. Bracke and others, London, September 17-18, 1879.

> **'As the co-operative character of the labour process becomes more and more marked, so, as a necessary consequence, does our notion of productive labour and of its agent, the productive labourer, become extended. In order to labour productively it is no longer necessary for you to do manual work yourself.'**
>
> MARX, *Capital*, Vol. I, ch. XVI.

August 18, 1972

Which way will the session of the Trades Union Congress this month cast its decisions? Will it restore, reaffirm and carry forward the line of the Special Congress at Croydon in March which proclaimed absolute opposition to co-operation with the Tory Government and the machinery of the Industrial Relations Act? Or will it endorse the line of the General Council majority (a majority faced with the active opposition of the minority, representing powerful union forces, on the General Council itself) which has thrown overboard the decisions of the Special Congress, and entered into increasingly close collaboration with the Tory Government and the employers to discuss future economic policy, at the same time as the bludgeon of the Industrial Relations Act retains its powers and the class battles of the workers in industry have reached new heights of intensity. No verbal jugglery or shadow boxing can conceal the sharpness of this division and the consequent responsibility of choice which Congress delegates will have to face. The outcome of their decisions will have far-reaching consequences for the future

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of trade unionism and the whole political prospect in Britain.

Britain: Storm Centre of Class Struggle

Britain was the first country to lead the way in the development of modern machine industry and become for the initial period 'the workshop of the world'. Britain led the way in the polarisation of the population into the class confrontation of bourgeoisie and industrial proletariat (the peasantry having been eliminated long before, and with agriculture in a subsidiary role conforming to a capitalist pattern). Britain led the way in the formation of the organised working class movement, already before Marxism, with initial attempts at political forms, and the basic organisation of the trade unions. Britain remains today the only capitalist country where the industrial working class is the majority of the population, capable of constituting, in alliance with the scientific, technical and professional sections whose interests are opposed to monopoly capital, the potential decisive and invincible social-political power able to build Britain anew. Today Britain leads the way in the capitalist decline and crisis of capitalism. At the same time Britain today leads the way, among all the major capitalist countries, in the intensity and scale of the class battles which have developed between the capitalist class, with its Tory Government and anti-union offensive, and the organised working class, now at the highest level of strength, numbers, tenacity, solidarity and militancy, despite weaknesses and divisions in the top leadership, in its whole historical record.

Myths Exploded

The leading organ of American finance-capital, the *Wall Street Journal*, has described Britain today as a land of deepening class division: 'Britain is a divided country, a country of "us against them", of working class against upper class.' Where now are all the illusory legends, so freely spread during the past decade by the fashionable apologists of the existing social order, and slavishly repeated by their ultra-leftist echoes, about the supposed disappearance of the active role of the working class in the modern Western advanced capitalist countries? The present-day working class in these wealthiest and most powerful countries of Western capitalism was described as having become acclimatised to the system, passively satisfied and joint sharers in exploitation, and no longer capable of militant struggle. Hence the only prospect for revolution in these advanced Western capitalist countries, according to these 'ultra-revolutionary' experts, must be looked for, not in the working class,

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but in the slums or intelligentsia or 'urban guerrillas' or isolated student actions separate from the working class. All these false myths so freely spread by fashionable ideologists in the recent period have been blown into thin air by the present class battles and victories of militancy of the British working class. Last month we wrote of the present period as 'a stormy period of open class confrontation and battles on a scale unequalled since the days of Red Friday and the general strike, and with a far higher level of working class strength of organisation.' Today we have to add that the tempo of active struggle, which had already risen to such record heights during 1971, has risen even higher in 1972. During the first half of 1972 the number of strike days, totalling 15.4 million, exceeded the total of 13.5 million for the whole of 1971.

New Initiatives of Working Class Militancy

Profoundly new features have characterised this upsurge of working class militancy, revealing creative initiatives of a range and character not previously paralleled in the records of trade unionism in the modern imperialist era. Previously there have been prolonged industrial struggles, grim tests of endurance, and in the period of depression most often ending in subjection to imposed terms of settlement. Previously there had been attempts to overcome sectionalism by building up formal alliances of major unions, as with the famous Triple Alliance of the miners, railwaymen and transport workers, constituted in 1914, which was shattered by the shameful betrayal of Black Friday in 1921. There have been successes of joint action, as with the combined stand which won Red Friday in 1925, or the Council of Action which stopped the anti-Soviet war plans of Lloyd George in 1920. But the new feature in the present stage of advance of the working class struggle has been the wealth and range of creative initiatives of the workers at the grass-roots level in localities all over the country, in small as well as large enterprises, to devise new dynamic forms of action, build up solidarity across all barriers of division, and challenge policies of redundancy and closures by taking over and running enterprises, and thus being seen by the whole people as champions of full production and full employment. All this has constituted a new stage in the working class struggle.

Defeats for the Tory Government

The creative initiatives of the workers in the present stage of struggle have thrown the plans of the Government and Toryism

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again and again into confusion. The miners were not content to be ground down passively through months of prolonged ordeal, as in 1926, into subjection. Instead their mass pickets were mobilised and deployed themselves with skilled strategy at every key point for the production and use of power throughout the country, and even on the water. The solidarity of other sections of the organised working class was no longer only expressed in declarations of support and collections for financial aid, but in active joint participation alongside the miners' pickets. The customary concentration of superior forces of police by the authorities at a given point to overawe the workers was defeated by the universal dispersed character of the swiftly mobile pickets of the miners over a wide range of strategic points, with massive local working class support, beyond the possibility of police intimidation or control. The culminating test of strength was demonstrated at the Saltley coke depot, where the heaviest concentration of police specially mobilised from a wide range had been stationed to force a way through for the lorries in spite of the pickets, and thus keep the depot open, with augmented reinforcements of the police as the struggle rose daily higher. But when, in face of this augmented reinforcement of the police, the Birmingham engineering workers marched in to the rescue in their organised formation of thousands, the outnumbered police recognised that there was no alternative save to withdraw, and the depot was closed. This experience revealed to the whole country the power of united working class action to defeat the reactionary pressure of the Government or police intimidation.

Significance of Upper Clyde Victory

No less significant for the future of class relations in Britain has been the outstanding victory of the Upper Clyde shipbuilding workers in the outcome of their long battle. Refusing to accept the closure of the yards as a result of the withdrawal of support by the Tory Government, they entered on the uncharted waters of a bold new course, and, in place of accepting dismissals and unemployment, took over the continued running of all the four yards in full production under workers' control. This creative challenge won the overwhelming support of the whole labour movement, many public bodies and the widest range of public opinion in Scotland, as well as all over Britain and internationally. In the end the Tory Government was compelled to climb down. Today in the final outcome all the four yards are in production on terms agreed by the mass meetings of the workers. The inspiration of this new challenge has

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found reflection in a host of 'work-ins' and 'sit-ins' of every type in a wide range of enterprises all over the country. All this is evidence of a new spirit in the present stage of working class struggle, finding expression in a variety of new forms of action without previous parallel. These examples of taking over and running enterprises under workers' control are not the beginning of the socialist revolution, as a few impatient theorists have tried to imagine. Basic change of the social order is not made in this piecemeal fashion. What is here expressed in new forms is the active reaffirmation of the old principle of 'the right to work'. But in present conditions this battle for the right to work, for full production and full employment, is a direct challenge to the Tory Government's policies of stagnation and unemployment. It is the harbinger of the increasing consciousness among wide sections of trade unionists of the need for decisive social change, which will require political struggle to fulfil.

Class Battles and Victories

The first half of 1972 has thus seen a significant series of victories won by the organised workers. These victories have been won in face of the most hostile reactionary Tory Government of modern times, proclaiming from the outset its determination to concentrate its offensive on the power of the unions and the claims of the organised workers. They have been won in face of the unexampled Star Chamber threats and bombardment of the Industrial Relations Act and its Court, the special agent devised by the Tory Government to bring the unions under control with penal sanctions. They have been won in face of the divisions of the top union leadership, and capitulatory trends of the majority of the General Council, thrown into panic alarm at the threat of the new offensive to union finances, and entering into close co-operative talks with the Government and the employers instead of leading the fight to defeat and compel the repeal of the Industrial Relations Act. Thus the battles and victories of the workers below have been in conspicuous contrast with the proceedings of the right-wing majority of the leadership on top. The historic landmark of the miners' victory in February dealt the first big blow to the calculations of the Tory Government, which had counted on the traditional strategy, as in 1926, to make the miners the main target of their attack in order to bring down the whole working class. The Government was caught unprepared by the new strategy of the mobile pickets of the miners and overwhelming working class solidarity. Defeated by the miners, they

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sought to bring down the railwaymen, utilising the machinery of the new Act to impose, first a 'cooling-off period', and then a ballot. The result, in place of revealing differences among the rank-and-file members, as they had hoped, revealed such a resounding majority, even among non-unionists, in support of the industrial action taken that the Government had no alternative but to climb down, and accept the settlement for a 13 per cent increase for the railwaymen.

Defeat of the Offensive against the Shop Stewards

The Government and Industrial Court tried to utilise the Act to cripple the finances of the unions by imposing monstrous fines, mounting up to £55,000 on the Transport Workers for the actions of their shop stewards, with a threat to sequestrate all funds if the offence were repeated. The General Council majority insisted that the fines be paid. But the Court of Appeal ruled (a ruling subsequently overruled by the House of Lords) that the fines should not be upheld, since a union could not be held responsible for the actions of its shop stewards. On the basis of this judgement the Industrial Court turned its offensive against the shop stewards, with warrants of arrest for individually named shop stewards, which were on the first assault cancelled at the last moment in face of the mass resistance; but the Court returned to the attack with new warrants of arrest which were carried out, with the imprisonment of the five dockers' shop stewards for 'contempt' of the Court. The result was the immediate closing of all ports by the strike of all dockers throughout the country; extending working class actions to secure the release of the imprisoned shop stewards; and the culminating decision of the General Council by a majority of 17 to 8 to call a general strike if they were not released. No alternative was left to the authorities save to release the imprisoned shop stewards amidst universal working class rejoicing. Of course this was not the end of the battle. At the moment of writing they are back at square one, to attack union finances once again by the House of Lords decision to reverse the ruling of the Court of Appeal and declare that the unions must be responsible for the actions of their shop stewards. But the experience of the release of the Pentonville Five has demonstrated the power of united working class action to defeat the attack of a Tory Government and its anti-union legislation, and thereby has indicated how much more could be accomplished if the whole strength of the trade union movement were mobilised for action to compel the withdrawal of the Industrial Relations Act, bring down the

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Tory Government and open the way to an election with the aim of returning a Government on a programme corresponding to the demands of the workers. This is the clear guiding line for the TUC this month.

Hocus Pocus Deflated

All this open battle of class confrontation has been conducted on the surface in a pompous ceremonial atmosphere of legal formulas, High Courts and Courts of Appeal. The National Industrial Court created by the Tory Government for its anti-union offensive is proclaimed a 'High Court', supposedly above the battle and sublimely independent of the Executive (although its judgement in fact exploded this pretence when it declared with regard to the Minister for Employment who had referred a case to them: 'It is not for us to agree or disagree with his view . . . it is his view and not ours which counts'). Any questioning of the inspiration and judgement of this High Court can be at any moment condemned as 'contempt' to be punished with prison. If a turn in the class struggle might require a tactical retreat of the authorities from a particular previous position, there is always the Court of Appeal to overrule the High Court, not to mention the Official Solicitor, and in the last resort the House of Lords to overrule the Court of Appeal. It is extremely valuable that the present experience is helping to expose in the eyes of masses of workers all this legal flapdoodle as the dressed-up masquerade to conceal the class realities. The vicious anti-union class offensive of the Tory Government is presented as requiring to be accepted in the name of the sublime classless conception of the 'rule of law', to question which is regarded as equivalent to condemning mankind to be dragged back into the primaeval slime. Our contributor Amphlett Micklewright has exposed on p. 409 this misuse of the conception 'rule of law', and cited the universally recognised constitutional authority of Dicey to establish the distinction between the conception of the 'rule of law' and a particular piece of legislation which may be temporarily enacted by a particular government (in this case a government returned by the support of one-third of the electorate) and may be reversed by another shortly after.

Duty to Resist Reactionary Laws

Victor Feather may have declared in his article in the *News of the World* on April 30: 'Trade unionists have always worked within the law.' But the General Secretary of the AUEW Engineering Section, Jim Conway, expressed the traditional doctrine of British

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trade unionism in relation to the 'rule of law' more justly when he wrote in the May issue of his union journal:

> The overwhelming proportion of trade union members are responsible, law-abiding people who respect and obey the rule of law. We are a movement founded on dissent with a long history of opposition to Governments and their efforts to destroy us. We have been forced many times to operate outside the law to maintain our very existence. We have not made that long and dangerous journey to allow a Tory Government in 1972 to achieve what so many of its predecessors have tried so often to do before.

Trade unions and trade union rights would not exist today if the founders and pioneers had not been ready to face prison and deportation for defying the laws which were devised to shackle the rights of working class combination. That duty of resistance does not belong only to the heroes in the past. The challenge has become all the greater in the modern conditions of today. Since the days of the Combination Acts there has never been so elaborate a machinery devised as the Industrial Relations Act to hamstring all the operations of trade unionism and subject all trade unions and trade unionists at every level to the detailed supervision and control of the Executive and the judiciary with a constant threat of penal sanctions for the recalcitrant. The promise of future repeal if and when a Labour Government is returned does not solve the present problems of the trade unions today. It is here and now that the trade unions are under attack. It is here and now that the battle has to be fought. The high responsibility of this month's TUC is to adopt clear and binding decisions for the mobilisation and organisation of the full strength of the whole trade union movement to carry through this essential fight to victory.

Toryism in Disarray

Never has the moment been so favourable for a mobilisation of the fullest united strength of all sections of the trade union and labour movement to defeat the offensive of the Tory Government and open the way to a new prospect for Britain. Newspaper opinion polls are no sure guide; but all of them are agreed that support for the Heath Government has fallen during the two years since the election of 1970 when one-third of the electorate voted it into office. Its disastrous record in the economy; the highest continuous levels of unemployment since the war; the soaring inflation; the burdens of increased rents, prices and taxation imposed and planned by the Government in a programme to include the aim to pay the

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heavy costs of forcing Britain against the will of the people into the reactionary monopolist combination of the West European Common Market; Northern Ireland, with a steady increase in the despatch of armed forces for repression; Rhodesia, and the continued attempts to make a deal with the illegal racialist regime; the constant sabotage of East-West détente in Europe; all this record is creating the conditions for a united popular movement to replace the Tory Government. And it is in this situation that the victories won by united working class action in the current period against the offensive of the Tory Government take on special significance. For these victories have pointed the way forward for a corresponding advance to successes on the whole political field, if only the combined efforts of all the active working class fighters and socialists can free the political labour movement from the straitjacket of consensus politics or sectarian separatism, and rally the united strength of all sections to bring down the Tory Government, force an election and return a new Government with a programme corresponding to the demands of the working class and socialist movement. It is here in this political field that this year's TUC can fulfil an indispensable role.

New Moves for Conciliation?

Divisions have developed in the high councils of Toryism on the strategy to be pursued in order to counter the successes won in the recent period by the strength of the organised workers at the point of production and their shop stewards, despite the divisions of the top union leadership, and despite all the elaborately devised machinery of the Industrial Relations Act and its Court to bring them under control. One school advocates a strong line to compel the unions to discipline their shop stewards. Such was the notorious demand of the Industrial Court in its judgement on May 12 when it declared that 'such a stand could lead to a strike and great dangers to the economy. These dangers are obvious, but they are short-term dangers. They must be faced in order that in the longer term we may have an orderly system of industrial relations.' Similarly the rabid *Economist*, foaming at the mouth as usual, could declare on July 29 with sublime disregard of political realities and consequences: 'Mr Bernie Steer and the other four mock martyrs who so eagerly sought their four days in Pentonville jail . . . should be dismissed from the union . . . and from the docks.' But the dominant leaders of the Tory Cabinet rejected these wild propositions, and preferred to try first the traditional strategy, when faced with the strength of united working

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class action, to seek to divide the workers. They proclaimed their aims for conciliation, and invited the leaders of the General Council for what became described as sessions of 'whisky and talks' at 10 Downing Street. These talks in turn led to the establishment of a tripartite group of representatives of the Tory Government, the Confederation of British Industry, and the TUC General Council to discuss the future of the economy and the common aims of the fight against inflation. Meanwhile the Industrial Relations Act remains in full force, and the grim struggle in industry continued below, as shown in the docks and on the building sites.

Political Gladiators of Big Business

Do these new moves for conciliation and towards co-operation of the Tory Government with the dominant majority leaders of the TUC mean that Tory Cabinet Ministers have turned over a new leaf and abandoned their class offensive? Of course not. The propagandist picture is put over for the innocent in the labour movement, in order to win acceptance of the policy of collaboration, that the Tory Ministers, having begun with an attempt to apply the abstract negative assumptions of doctrinaire Toryism, had discovered the failure of their assumptions in the real world, and have moved over to more reasonable policies. Thus the Confederation of British Industry is depicted in this legendary analysis as the representative of big business interests, often seeking to dissociate themselves from the aggressive doctrinaire class offensive of the Heath Tory Cabinet. Such a picture would conceal from view the background of key Tory Cabinet Ministers of very real links with some of the most powerful concerns of monopoly capitalism. Before John Davies became Minister for Trade and Industry he had been Managing Director of Shell-Mex and British Petroleum from 1961-65 and Director General of the Confederation of British Industry from 1965-69. Before Lord Carrington became Minister of Defence he had been Chairman of the Australia and New Zealand Bank. Before Robert Carr became Minister for Employment, and now Home Secretary and Leader of the House, he had been a Director of the notorious Securicor. So far from the Tory Cabinet being counterposed to the CBI as the representative of big business, the Tory Cabinet Ministers might rather be regarded as the political gladiators of big business, engaged in major issues of class strategy.

Tory Class Strategy

It is not for love of the beautiful blue eyes of Victor Feather and

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his associates from the General Council that they are invited for cosy talks to Downing Street. Certainly it is a remarkable change from the Heath Government's previous studied display of aloof detachment in relation to the General Council. But the change is the outcome of the defeats inflicted on the Government by the strength of the united actions of the workers in industry, by the miners' mobile pickets, the railwaymen's work-to-rule and ballot, or the work-in of the Upper Clyde shipbuilders, compelling surrenders from the side of the Government and retreats from previous proclaimed policies. These retreats on the part of the Government were enforced by the strength of united working class action, in spite of all the machinery of the Industrial Relations Act and the Industrial Court to paralyse their power, and in spite of the divisions among the top leadership and capitulatory trends of the right-wing majority on the General Council.

Action on Two Levels

In this situation it was the obvious strategy for the Tory Government to play on the divisions in the union leadership; to seek to draw into co-operation the General Council or the right-wing majority on the General Council, and thus isolate the militant workers and their shop stewards. But this does not mean that the class struggle has been replaced by class peace. It means that the action proceeds on two levels. On top, the cosy chats. Below, the real battle in industry has continued, with the varying fortunes of the struggle of the dockers and builders, the massing of the police, multiple arrests, and provocations to replace the picture of the disciplined role of the pickets by a picture of incidents and violence. It was a characteristic expression of this renewal of the battle at the moment when the workers had won an outstanding victory that, on the very same day, July 26, on which the five dockers' shop stewards were released from jail by the triumphant stand of the organised working class, the House of Lords delivered its new offensive to overrule the decision of the Court of Appeal and call on the Transport Workers to pay the fines of £55,000 and recognise the principle that the unions have the duty to discipline their shop stewards or undergo the full rigours of the Industrial Relations Act.

Political Responsibility of the TUC

This is the situation which throws the highest political responsibility on the TUC. The trade unions have played a leading political role, in alliance with the socialist organisations, to found the Labour

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Party as a partnership, at that time without bans, of all working class fighters, trade unionists and socialists, in a common battle. The trade unions have played a leading political role during the recent period, in alliance with the socialists, communists and all active militants in the Labour Party, to carry forward the advance of policies towards the left, not only in the TUC, but in the Labour Party Conference and the Labour Party Executive, together with some partial reflection in the Parliamentary Party. But now comes the greatest test and challenge. What is to be the line of battle to rally the support of the workers and the overwhelming majority of the people in order to bring down the Tory Government and return a new Government which shall carry out the radical new departures in policy that the present situation requires? What is to be the policy and programme of such an alternative Government? Is it to be the ambiguous equivocal indefiniteness and practical limitation of the Green Paper, on which Jim Sillars MP justly writes in the current issue: 'If the left is not careful, half-baked compromises camouflaged in slogans is all that will emerge'? Or is it to be a programme for decisive economic, social and political changes to challenge the domination of the biggest monopolies and open the path for democratic anti-monopolist advance?

Unity is Strength

The progressive forces of trade unionism can here play a decisive role for the strength and success of the political labour movement, to win the adoption of such a programme of advance, and to promote the unity essential for its fulfilment. Part of the reason for the significant increase in the strength of the trade unions in numbers, organisation and successes won during the recent period has been the elimination of most of the old divisive methods of discrimination (a resolution from the Constructional Section of the Engineers on the TUC agenda calls for the lifting of the ban on Communist Party members being elected to the Annual Conference of Trades Councils, and it is to be hoped that this resolution will be adopted, thereby also giving a helpful signal for the political movement). This has made possible the democratic all-inclusive participation of the membership on all issues, with the co-operation of all on the left, communist and non-communist equally, for the benefit of the whole movement. In the political labour movement there has been some welcome relaxing of the rigidity of the previous barriers and some beginnings of broad co-operation of members of all sections; but the trade unions have still to establish freedom of choice of their delegates without

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discrimination. The trade unions can here play a decisive part to end the barriers of discrimination, and thus on the basis of working class unity promote the same advance in strength of organisation and activity in the political labour movement as has been achieved on this basis in the trade unions. In the present critical battle against the class offensive of Toryism and for a new policy the broadest united co-operation of all engaged in the common battle, socialists, communists, trade unionists, Labour Party activists, students, the wide circles represented by the readers of *Tribune* and the *Morning Star*, and the numerous pressure groups and committees now performing invaluable functions on special issues, needs to be and can be built up, and is essential for victory. The TUC in its proceedings can play a decisive role in promoting this objective to win a new political future for Britain.

R.P.D.

LABOUR MONTHLY FIFTY YEARS AGO

Since the formation of the present General Council at Cardiff last year there has been a steady succession of lockouts and strikes. In every case the principal weakness has been the lack of a uniform policy and centralised leadership. While the present structure of the unions is undoubtedly faulty, it is certain that more could have been got out of these struggles had any attempt been made to face boldly the requirements of the situation and cut through the walls of prejudice and jealousy that characterise the present leadership of the unions.

Never has the need for this uniformity of action and policy been so great. Never have the opportunities for demonstrating the efficacy of new methods as against the old ones been so favourable. Never have the workers themselves shown, under such adverse circumstances, such a magnificent fighting spirit and such a desire for solidarity as during the last eighteen months. Despite all this, it is doubtful if there has ever existed such an absence of unity amongst the leaders of the unions as at present, the chief of whom all form the personnel of the General Council.

All of the leaders are men of influence and a great following, but not one of them has yet shown a desire to use that influence and following in an effort to win a common struggle. Why? Because in every strike or lockout no thought of a common victory for the working class enters into the plan of campaign. It is only the limited idea of 'what I can get out of it for my union' that predominates. . . .

It is not enough to be singing the praises of solidarity at Cardiff or Southport; we must build up a General Council that has the power to practise solidarity in actual labour conflicts.

(From 'The Future of the General Council', by Harry Pollitt, *Labour Monthly*, September 1922)

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TRADE UNIONS AND THE LABOUR PARTY

Alan Fisher*
General Secretary
National Union of Public Employees

WHAT prompts the average worker to join a trade union in the first place? It is not usually a sharply defined sense of class consciousness and the corresponding urge to promote radical social change. More often it is a subjective—almost instinctive—act of self preservation; it is a recognition by the worker that if his personal occupational interests are to be protected against the vicissitudes of a hostile work environment he must to some extent form an alliance with others who are in a similar situation. Basically it is a personalised and individual decision, not a collective or social action.

Some workers—and, it must be admitted, some unions—never progress beyond this point. As a consequence their trade unionism is narrow and sectional; it provides fertile ground for politicians and the mass media to exploit, in order to divide the working class. On the other hand, the act of becoming a trade unionist is, for other workers, merely the starting point in a long process of development by which their level of consciousness is continually raised. Through participation in the trade union movement they begin to realise their own individual potential, increase their confidence, gain a deeper understanding of society and to emerge as articulate representatives of the union. Ultimately they reach the stage where they realise that there is a limit to the concessions they can wring from a competitive and acquisitive society, yet at the same time their desires and expectations have been raised by the inflated claims made by that society itself. This is the point where a qualitative change of attitude takes place. In addition to their day to day demands as trade unionists, the bread-and-butter issues, they begin to demand radical changes in the nature of society itself; and it is at this point they enter into fundamental conflict with those who have a vested interest in preserving the competitive and acquisitive society.

I have stated this proposition at some length because I believe that it reflects the changing relationships between the trade union movement in total and the Labour Party as an organised political force. When the TUC took the decision which led to the setting up of the Labour Representation Committee more than seventy years ago its

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objectives were extremely modest: to secure 'an increased number of labour members to the next parliament.' The word 'labour' described the function, not the political philosophy, of the kind of people the trade unionists wanted to see in parliament. Even so, it was not until the Taff Vale judgment some years later—which threatened the funds of the unions in the same way as the Industrial Relations Act now does—that any significant numbers of the important unions decided to affiliate to the LRC; and then it was primarily to exercise some parliamentary political power in order to secure a change in the law to restore the pre-Taff Vale situation.

At this point in time the majority of the unions were responding in a subjective fashion to a political situation which threatened their internal welfare and organisational existence. In this way they were behaving very much as a worker does when he first joins a union in order to secure a personal insurance for the future.

But, just as a worker as an individual raises his level of consciousness through trade union experience, the unions as collective organisations have also risen to new levels of understanding. Two world wars, the inter-war depression, the successive economic crises of the post-war years and the methods used by both Conservative and Labour Governments in their attempts to overcome those crises—all of these things have made a positive contribution to the development of the assertive and confident trade unionism that has emerged in Britain in recent years. Now, more than ever before, trade unions are not only demanding immediate measures to protect and marginally advance the interests of their members; they are also posing radical alternatives to the whole structural form of society.

The reasons for this new level of understanding are not difficult to discern. The rapid technological advances of the post-war years have demonstrated that the means of providing a better and fuller life are within the bounds of human technical competence. But at the same time it has demonstrated that the way in which the productive resources are organised and controlled limit the extent to which the benefits of this technology are distributed amongst the mass of working people. Capitalist society—having provoked the needs and raised the levels of expectation—is unable to deliver the goods; as a consequence more and more trade unions are saying that capitalism is an obstacle to progress and must be replaced.

It is this increasing politicalisation of the trade union movement which is creating difficulties for the Labour Party, because it has come at precisely the time when an influential section of the Labour Party—particularly the Parliamentary Labour Party—appears determined to

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expunge what remains of the Party's socialist content in order to create a 'non-class' party which can occupy the middle ground of British politics in the belief that from this position it will have wide electoral appeal and as a consequence almost automatic majorities at each general election.

Twenty years or so ago, this attempt to dilute the class basis of the Labour Party might have succeeded. In those days there were several of the largest unions in the country which could always be relied upon to cast their massive votes with the more conservative element of the Labour Party; and those same unions ensured that the TUC seldom deviated far from the middle of the road position. In those days it was largely the left-wing of the constituency parties and a small but articulate section of the Parliamentary Labour Party who, through what was basically a form of guerrilla political warfare, frustrated attempts to shift the Party permanently to the right. Today it is the unions who are the focal point; not in preventing a shift to the right but in pushing the Party over to the left. And because the unions have considerable resources the action is not that of guerrilla political warfare, but direct and open confrontation.

There are those in the labour movement who continually decry this state of affairs. They argue that the spectacle of leading figures in the unions and the Labour Party in confrontation can only bring comfort to our mutual opponents—meaning the Tories—and delay the election of a Labour Government.

I take the contrary view. The first and most effective step in defeating the Tories, and that means much more than merely defeating them at the ballot box in a general election, is to commit the Labour Party to a political programme which is aimed directly against the form of society which finds political expression in the Conservative Party. If this needs an intellectual confrontation within the labour movement as a prerequisite, and it obviously does, then we must have that confrontation; if the trade unions avoided it merely to preserve a façade of unity we would be returning to the lowest level of consciousness.

It is for this reason that my union has placed on the agenda for this year's National Labour Party Conference a resolution which calls on the next Labour Government to pursue policies designed to redistribute income and wealth in favour of the working class; to extend public ownership and control of industry and the land; to limit the area of management prerogative and to expand the scope and the standard of the social services. This is not a pious resolution: we realise that to pursue such a policy a Labour Government would have

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to form a solid alliance with the unions in order to make a direct assault on the strongly entrenched bastions of privilege which are the hard centre of our present class society. But we also realise that it is only through such a policy that the expectations and aspirations of working people can be fulfilled.

LABOUR'S ELECTION POLICY

Jim Sillars MP

WHEN considering the Labour Party's green paper on policy it is important to remember that the document is only at this stage one for discussion. The real crunch over policy will come next year when a shorter and more precise statement will attempt to lay down the priorities for action when next Labour forms the Government.

No one should underestimate the fight that lies ahead to ensure that the election manifesto unequivocally commits the next Labour Government to socialist policies.

Already George Thomson is calling for a return to consensus thinking in the Party, arguing that Labour must win the middle ground, and urging the Party to turn away from what he obviously regards as the temptation to reply to Heath's extremist Tory policies with socialist answers.

As the next election approaches, the right in the Party will be attempting to make a comeback. They will concentrate on policy and on fashioning the green paper proposals into a statement which will lead us gently back to consensus, and away from the socialist policies which could emerge from the document now before the movement for consideration.

The green paper is the ground over which the policy issues will be fought. The question every socialist will ask is whether or not the green paper provides a socialist answer to every major problem. The reply must be that at this stage it does not. The green paper is deficient in one very important respect. Its underlying theme is not based on a fundamental challenge to the capitalist system, and so a number of its important proposals are unlikely to obtain the objectives which socialists would consider essential.

I will pick out what to my mind is *the* crucial issue, full employment, to substantiate that declaration. On this the green paper

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argues that there is no evidence to suggest that anything fundamental has happened to the economy which would prevent 'policies for balanced economic expansion' dramatically reducing unemployment.

This ignores the obvious. That the march of technology in a private-enterprise economy will constantly shake-out labour from the workforce, and that the extent of this development in the last three or four years has been quite phenomenal. In one recent period we have witnessed the manufacturing sector shed over 400,000 workers and still produce more with the smaller workforce. The green paper does not seem to grasp that the combined forces of capitalism and technological advance are certain to continue creating mass unemployment.

The situation in Britain today is that unless the capitalist economy expands at the rate of at least 10 per cent per annum we have no chance of reaching full employment. And who has promised to go for growth at 10 per cent per annum? No one. Who has diagnosed the real malaise and prescribed the only solution, the common ownership of the means of production? Not the green paper.

It is vital that the left grasps this point about the philosophy of the green paper. There are still important areas of policy on which no pronouncements have really been made, other than to state that working parties are studying proposals: on land, publicly-owned financial institutions, and nationalisation for example. If the left is not careful, half-baked compromises camouflaged in slogans are all that will emerge.

The position as I see it is that, under the shock of our 1970 defeat, the rank-and-file of the Party saw the defects of consensus in the years 1964-70 with a new clarity, and started back on the road to socialist policies in the last two Annual Conferences. The green paper is the first response of substance from the leadership to rank-and-file pressure. It certainly makes a number of concessions, promising an occupational health service and no anti-union measures, to mention two, but it does not measure up to the manifest desire of the membership to get back to socialist policies.

The green paper could give the leadership the tactical initiative in policy-making over the next twelve months. The left must ensure that this does not happen. We must take the better parts of the green paper and establish them as the new policy law of the Party, and simultaneously push through resolutions which in their basic approach are socialist, and insist that policies are built upon them and not some of the misconceptions about the nature of our society which permeates so much of the green paper.

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THE PENTONVILLE FIVE

Jack Dash

WHEN will the Cabinets of Governments, in substance or in shadow, ever learn? The oldest and the most experienced labour force in the world, the British trade union movement, will never permit any Government, no matter of what political persuasion, to turn them back to conditions in which our courageous forebears the Chartists started the road to change that brought an end to convict ships and Botany Bay, in which those were imprisoned who had the courage to want to change the harsh relations between master and man. . . . When will they ever learn that no act of legislation, whether it be 'In Place of Strife' or 'Industrial Relations', can make it subservient to the employing class of monopoly capital and the financial gnomes, the bankers?

Surely this was positively illustrated by the dramatic events of July, culminating in the arrest of the five militant shop stewards from the Royal Group of Docks, London, for having the courage to implement the policy and lines of action called for by the rank-and-file who elected them, the fight for the right to work and protect their kith and kin. The popular phrase, 'the Pentonville Five', is now echoing in the sound-waves over the world of trade unionism.

The impact of the arrest was immediate; a wind of fury rose to a storm of anger and brought about a spontaneity of united action from all trades and professions never experienced in the post-war years, so fierce that the Knights of the TUC Round Table were forced to stop shadow-boxing and reluctantly threaten a 24-hour general strike unless the five men were released. But the Pentonville Five did not have to spend another weekend away from their families. The grass-roots rank-and-file had forced the Government to release the five, and the most tremendous victory of the post-war industrial struggles was achieved and is now written in indelible ink in the history of our glorious trade union movement and has an honoured place in the archives of the TUC. How proud I am that once again it was the registered port workers who were in the van-guard (shades of the 'Old Bailey Seven') and for the second time challenged an Act that was made to shackle the British labour movement and turn back the industrial clock a hundred years. Exactly a hundred years ago, in 1872, two stokers were sentenced by a Tory judge to one year's imprisonment for attempting to organise an unofficial strike at the Becton Gas Works, East London.

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What are the lessons to be drawn, apart from the very important fact that freedom was restored to the individual? It was the importance of the class-consciousness that forged the weapon of Unity so hated and feared by the establishment, and it increased the class flame set afire by the lads and lasses of the Clyde—the UCS—and by the miners, railwaymen, engineers, print workers and many others. . . . When will the TUC leadership ever learn that it is a *class* struggle and stop their Downing Street safari, acting like statesmen, to get this most vicious of Tory cabinets out of the economic chaos they have created? When will these knights of the TUC ever learn that even when 'jousting at the tournaments' you have got to unseat your opponent? And you can only do that with lance and sword, not matchsticks! Act now!

In conclusion, when will the Big White Heath 'Morning Cloud', and scalp-hunting cabinet, ever learn that they cannot hold back the awakened advance of the organised labour movement? The winds of change are rising to the velocity of a cyclone. No Tory or right-wing social democratic Government can resist: bend or get out of our way! You cannot succeed where the mightiest anti-working class powers failed. The Axis, Hitler's Third Reich, Mussolini's fascist state and imperial Japan failed! When will they ever learn?

To the lads and lasses of our glorious labour movement, no letting up, be ever vigilant. Action is the art of gunnery. Keep the power on the shop floor.

CORRECTION

R. Page Arnot writes to say that in his memoir on D. N. Pritt in the July issue he made a very serious mistake and conflated two different legal cases in which Pritt had appeared for the Defence in South Wales. No mention was made by Pritt in his autobiography of the names of either of the two Judges concerned: but, writes Arnot, 'it is due to the memory of Mr Justice Talbot whose "icy impartiality" was described by Pritt to make it clear that my mistake would have inflicted a grievous libel on the memory of one who bore the highest reputation in his profession.'

It is incidentally the first time in fifty-one years of this journal that the Associate Editor, who normally checks all his sources scrupulously, has had to correct a startling departure from his norm.

Editor, *Labour Monthly*

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THE RULE OF LAW

F. H. Amphlett Micklewright

DURING recent weeks the Tory leadership has been prolific in its use of the phrase 'the rule of law'. The imposition of the Industrial Relations Act and the imprisonment of five dockers for the technical offence of showing contempt towards the newly created National Industrial Relations Court (NIRC) represented in Tory eyes the rule of law. Workers who came out on unofficial strike against the imprisonment of the five dockers and thereby threatened to cause the national economy to grind to a halt were making their appeal to the law of the jungle. The men were released upon the application of the Official Solicitor and on the grounds that the situation had changed through a decision of the House of Lords which upheld the NIRC in maintaining that the Transport and General Workers' Union is answerable for the activities of its shop stewards, thereby reversing Lord Denning in the Court of Appeal. Once again, the rule of law was dragged in as a means of getting the Tory leadership off a very nasty hook.

It is worth considering exactly what is meant in the existing British constitution by this 'rule of law'. In modern form the phrase was codified by A. V. Dicey in *The Law of the Constitution*, a work commonly regarded by lawyers as 'of authority'. Certainly, the most reactionary would find it difficult to discover a trace of left-wing tendencies anywhere in the volume! Dicey maintained that the rule of law meant that all men are equal before the law, that the courts are open to every man and that the common law is developed through application by the courts, thus arising out of the constitution itself. In other words, Dicey took great care to limit his rule of law to the common law of England, the unchallenged tradition since 1189, as opposed to statute law. He did not mean that the same status of rule attained to any statute which any parliament chose to pass at any time. Thus, the constitutional convention that 'the king can do no wrong' means that a monarchical act cannot run counter to the common law, and it is the common law which binds the monarchy unless it be also bound by the express provision of a specific statute.

The supremacy of parliament as the body maintaining the constitution was likewise a basic assertion made by Dicey. But the learned author was too astute not to see that a parliament might abuse its position. Suppose, he asked, that some parliament decided to pass a law that all blue-eyed babies should be put to death. It would

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be the law in so far as it had received the assent of the supreme body which sets forth the constitution and which maintains the statute book. But, Dicey argued, there are important safeguards. Parliament is made up of normally rational and humane men whose instincts would be against passing such an act. These men need to seek re-election in five years time, and the passing of deeply unpopular legislation would tell against this result. Public opinion is a force within its own right, and public opinion would enforce a changing of the situation. The act of such a parliament could not go unchallenged.

When the use of the phrase 'the rule of law' by Heath, Macmillan and Barber be recalled, it is interesting to notice how far they were from its use by the great common lawyers. They were dealing with a law which was not developed out of the common law tradition at all but with a political statute passed by a parliament which has an overall Tory majority of only 28 seats returned by an electoral minority. It was never universally accepted but had been opposed by public opinion from the start. In fact, its nearest analogy is that of Dicey's law putting to death all blue-eyed babies! The application of the act provoked open and hostile opposition from the trade unions. It is a matter of plain common sense to assert that, despite ministerial denials, the unofficial strikes and the use of pressure brought the imprisonment to an end. But what was this other than an extension of Dicey's phrase, 'public opinion'? It cannot be said to have been violence or conduct calculated to cause a breach of the peace. It was a withdrawal of labour designed to continue so long as the men remained in prison. But this was nothing else than public opinion taking a particular shape in a form which Dicey contemplated as lying within the rule of law! The battle must now continue, if needs be, along the same lines. A decision has been made by the House of Lords, the highest court of appeal in terms of the Industrial Relations Act, which places trade union funds in jeopardy as the result of actions by their shop stewards. It restores a fine upon the Transport and General Workers' Union of £55,000 as well as the payment of £25,000 costs. In short, the contributions of the workers are to be seized instead of the imprisoning of their bodies. Such is the latest outcome of this iniquitous statute and there is no further court to which appeal can be made. Once again, public opinion as an active form is the only weapon which lies at the workers' command. The situation calls for an extension and application of the same policies as those by which the imprisoned dockers secured release. But this time it must be a demand for the immediate repeal of the law in

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order that this modern version of the Taff Vale onslaught upon union funds may be withstood.

Doubtless, the Tory Government will reply with a scream that this attitude is an appeal away from the rule of law to that of the jungle. Looking at the matter from the non-socialist angle of the constitution as it now prevails, they are talking nonsense and worse. No question of the common law arises. In the eyes of its greatest conventional exponent in modern times, the protest against a particular anti-union statute which has caused all the trouble is nothing more than an expression of public opinion covered by the rule of law. Every constitutional method to overcome a bad law through the courts has failed and the statute is to be interpreted in a manner oppressive to unfettered trade union action. There can be only one course in such a position, to break the bad law or to beat it down with the force of public opinion. Such in point of fact was the policy adopted in England and Scotland during the period of the combination acts, by the Reform League over the closure of Hyde Park, or by Charles Bradlaugh over the oath controversy, to take but a few examples from working class history as a whole. It is exactly this historic attitude of protest that Heath and his supporters wish now to label as the law of the jungle.

The misuse of the phrase 'the rule of law' by the Tory leaders is one which must be contested. It is little other than a confidence trick played upon the public. Even when the highly establishmentarian figure of Professor Dicey is used as a measuring rod, Heath's use of the phrase is made in such a way as to cover applications which the Professor never had in contemplation, and to result in a thoroughly bad interpretation of the meaning of the British constitution. But it is also a confidence trick which makes for autocratic government, which justifies laws passed to hamper the free association and action of workers, and which perverts the constitution into the shape of a cabinet dictatorship. The struggle over the Industrial Relations Act is first and foremost an industrial issue. But it must also be recalled that this aspect exists within a constitutional issue designed by Tory ministers to reinterpret the rule of law in a manner hostile to the very basis of the British constitution as it now stands, the rights and liberties of the individual subject.

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Daily Worker cartoons of August 8 and November 2, 1931

R. Page Arnot writes:

The Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance issued in June 1931 a report (the Holman Gregory Report) proposing an increase in contributions of 20 per cent and a decrease in benefits of 2s. 0d per week (males 15s. 0d, females 13s. 0d). The report on July 31 of the Committee on National Expenditure (the May Committee Report) stiffened these earlier proposals. That autumn there were two-and-three-quarter millions out of work.

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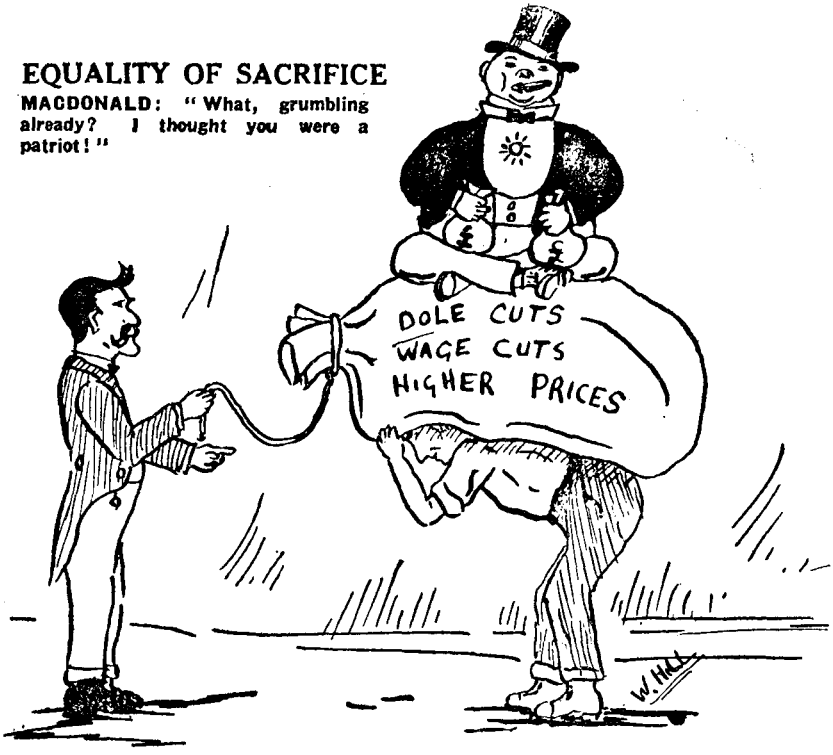

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Three months later Ramsay MacDonald, who had been Labour premier, appeared as Prime Minister alongside the Tories in a National Government, with cuts in the soldiers' and sailors' pay (hence the Invergordon Mutiny), wage-cuts, dole-cuts, means test and high prices. 'Equality of sacrifice' (the pay of admirals also to be cut) was proclaimed as a 'patriotic' measure to stop inflation and save the pound sterling. On September 20, within eleven days after the budget to impose the cuts which would save the pound, the pound was devalued.

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PLANNING CAN WORK

Andrew Rothstein

THE first half-yearly Report for 1972 of the Soviet Central Statistical Department, published on July 23, was remarkable for several reasons. One was that it did not call forth the usual outbreak of discordant caterwauling by the millionaire press of Great Britain about 'economic crisis in Russia', 'failure of grandiose Soviet plans', etc. There have been some squeaks about 'crop failure in the Ukraine', it is true. The extraordinarily cold winter this year, in normally warmer regions, made necessary extensive resowing in the spring: and then an extraordinarily hot summer, which speeded up the maturing of crops in European regions of the USSR which are normally spaced out in this respect, has created difficulties in harvesting. But the now well-mechanised collective and state farms, with their large and rapidly-growing body of technically trained personnel, and aided by large numbers of industrial workers who have responded to a call by the trade unions to help in the countryside at this time, have coped with these difficulties. As before in such cases, the Soviet Government has anticipated calls on its reserves by purchasing several million tons of this year's American surplus grain crop. And with similar problems unexpectedly hitting British farming over large areas this summer, ill-wishers find it less easy to lecture the Soviet Union.

The general results of the half-year are still less encouraging for them. Industrial output is up nearly seven per cent compared with the same period in 1971. Every industrial Ministry, and every republic, shows overfulfilment of its plans, both in volume of production and in raising productivity of labour. This result is illustrated by actual output figures for 90 main products, whether capital goods (from coal to computers) or consumer goods (from woollens to vacuum cleaners) or foodstuffs (from butter to pastries). There are some products where the plans have not been fully met: but for the most part the underfulfilment is of the order of one to four per cent, the exceptions being turbines (76 per cent) and washing machines (73 per cent). There are more cattle, pigs and poultry than at this time last year, and state purchases of meat, milk and eggs are all up. Scores of new factories, or new departments of existing works, have gone into operation. There are 300,000 acres of newly irrigated lands and 500,000 acres of newly drained lands (total land under grain exceeds 250 million acres). It is of particular

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interest to us in Britain that, while freight carried by road is up five per cent, rail freights are also up four per cent.

As always, workers in capitalist countries can find special interest in that section of the Report which is headed: 'Rise in the Living and Cultural Standards of the People.' One can only quote some principal results without comment—but as food for thought.

Workers in the national economy are up by 2,400,000 to 93,700,000 —and no unemployment.

Average monthly wage—128.5 roubles—means a rise of 3½ per cent, while remuneration of collective farmers (their 'share-out') is up by five per cent.

Sales of all consumer goods are over 100 per cent above the first half of 1971, except for potatoes (99 per cent), vegetables (98 per cent), fruit (95 per cent), motorcycles (99 per cent), radio sets (98 per cent), and washing machines (80 per cent)—and the Report adds: 'The growing demand of the people for some commodities was still not completely satisfied.'

About 550,000 new flats were built by the state, as well as large numbers of houses by collective farms or by individual townsfolk with state credits. At the same time new schools accommodating 80,000 children, and new pre-school institutions (day nurseries and nursery schools) for 55,000 infants, were built and occupied.

Over 600,000 young people (girls and boys) completed their secondary and technical education in evening schools, and another 2,200,000 in daytime classes. About 700,000 'diploma' engineers, doctors, teachers, agronomists, economists and other specialists qualified at higher educational establishments this summer.

One other point which seems to reflect, in its own way, the psychological effect of these and other results: over 1,800,000 inventions and suggestions for improving production processes were put into effect in the national economy. This kind of voluntary constructive effort (rewarded on a generous scale) has grown steadily, from 202,000 in 1940 and 655,000 in 1950, to 3,600,000 in 1971 (figures for the full years).

Anyone recently visiting the Soviet Union in town or countryside in successive years can confirm that the impression of rising efficiency and easier life left by these statistics is what one gets from personal experience too.

'Ah yes,' comes the reply pat from the enemies of socialism, 'but they can't strike.' To which one may answer (a) yes they can: no law forbids it (b) but they have guarantees by law which, *if* they existed in Britain, would obviate practically all the strikes in

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progress here—nobody can be sacked without permission of the works committee, no shop steward can be sacked without permission of the union district committee; no overtime without permission of the works committee, and then only a small amount, fixed by law; equal pay for women; no transfer to other work without union agreement; safety and health conditions supervised by inspectors elected by the workers in the factory; collective agreements at factory level must be approved clause by clause at workers' meetings to be valid; breaking the laws or collective agreements means sacking or demotion for managers, on union representations.

But there is a third aspect of these mid-1972 results which deserves attention. They explain why all the members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, i.e. all the socialist countries, *including those on whose supposed 'rift' with the USSR the capitalist class has pinned such hopes*, have at their 26th meeting in Moscow this July placed on record their satisfaction with the working of the 'Complex Programme' for further developing their socialist economic integration, adopted last year, which sets out guiding lines for the next 15 to 20 years. Not only did their industrial output rise by 7.8 per cent last year, compared with under one per cent in the 'advanced' capitalist countries, but they expanded their foreign trade by nearly nine per cent without causing any tariff disputes, currency crises or the like (on the contrary they are approaching the establishment of a common unit for calculating their mutual obligations). Their practical experience of co-operation already in such spheres as production of electric power, equipment for atomic stations, chemicals, machinery and equipment of various types, led them to adopt far-reaching agreements for much bigger industrial projects, scientific joint research and technical co-operation. Even more important, they decided on a step which, ten years ago, might have aroused strong feelings: during the next three years to dovetail their own next five-year plans (1976-80) in a way which will make possible unprecedentedly long-term economic agreements, multilateral as well as bilateral. This is not a case of 'fusing' their national economies, much less of subordinating one to the rest (as with Britain in the Common Market) but of ensuring by international co-operation the best possible management of each national economy.

Obviously both the experience which this reflects, and the confidence which it requires, would be impossible without the mounting successes of the giant economy of the USSR which has given them so much help since they threw off the burden of capitalism and feudalism at the end of the second world war.

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NORTHERN IRELAND

Betty Sinclair

THE hope that direct rule would solve the problems of Northern Ireland was doomed from the start. In place of a unionist administration, based on almost total repression of political opponents, there came into being an administration which promised no fundamental changes and only succeeded in antagonising the minority and majority alike. Efforts were made to win over the 'moderates' in the Unionist and anti-Unionist camps; to isolate the 'terrorists' (with tongue in cheek it was said 'on both sides'); and to behead the leadership of the struggle for civil rights.

As Seamus Twomey, IRA Provisional leader in the North, at a press conference held in Belfast on July 12 said: 'Whitelaw has promised everything to everybody and he has now come to the end of the line and he has no promises left.' The resumption of the abortive cease fire is seen as a distant prospect by Mr Paddy Devlin MP (Social Democratic and Labour Party) '. . . unless Whitelaw moves, reverses the attitude of the British Army towards the minority and provides protection for catholics in "mixed areas" and releases all the internees.' Mr Devlin expressed strong reservations about meeting Whitelaw again whilst the policy of appeasement towards the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) continued.

Whitelaw called for an end to the 'no-go' areas in Derry, and allowed such areas to be created by the UDA in Protestant working class areas in Belfast. He castigated the IRA and permitted a 'loyalist' paramilitary force, now estimated to number 43,000, to be created which has challenged the right of the British Army to enter any area under their 'control'. Whitelaw promised protection to 'all the people', and allowed the troops and police to stand by whilst hundreds of Catholic families were forced from their homes and were driven from their small businesses by hooded and armed thugs.

For the minority and the progressive forces, direct rule has meant no change in the policies being carried out. No attempt has been made to remove reactionary legislation, implement the meagre reform programme, release all the internees or speed up the democratic process. The loss of life continues in sectarian killings, and the numbers killed since the pogrom of August 1969, including British troops, begins to approach the 500 mark.

The unionists, who enjoyed uninterrupted rule for so long, also see no hope from Whitelaw rule. Their demand for the return of a

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'strengthened Stormont' conflicts with British Tory and Labour policy, and the Unionist ultras embarked on a campaign to bring about the downfall of Whitelaw and, if necessary, form their own 'independent' administration by force of arms. It would be, of course, British! The official Unionist Party and its leaders are totally discredited and in its and their place has arisen the Vanguard movement led by William Craig MP, the UDA led by anonymous and hooded men, and the Loyalist Association of Workers led by William Hull, member of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, the UDA and Vanguard. The old emblems of unity with Britain have been discarded. The Union Jack has been replaced by the so-called 'Ulster' flag—the new version of which is minus the cross of St George. (British politicians and saints have fallen alike in the eyes of the Unionists.) The myth that the Orange Order was a religious organisation was completely dispelled on July 12, 1972, when from its platforms were uttered demands for the resignation of Whitelaw, a rejection of Westminster and all its works, and for the use of arms to 'advance the loyalist cause and meet all eventualities.'

The Rev Martin Smyth, top Belfast Orangeman, asked his July 12 audience if they could 'trust Westminster' and the answer was a resounding 'No'. William Craig told his listeners that there was 'no alternative but to mobilise the strength of our people and there are no lengths to which we are not entitled to go to restore our democratic [Unionist] Government.' Sir Knox Cunningham, former Westminster MP for South Antrim, said that 'loyalists should be like the peoples of Israel and Rhodesia—prepared to use arms for the restoration of Stormont.' Mr John D. Taylor MP, former Secretary of State at the Ministry of Home Affairs, told his audience that there was not one political party in Britain which supported the Unionists and that, for the first time in 150 years, the Union Jack had been rejected by the 'loyalists' of 'Ulster' in favour of the 'Ulster flag'. Thus do the imperialists make rebels of us all!

The former supporters of Unionism have rejected their former leaders, find no succour in their links with the British Conservatives (outside of men like Deedes and Powell) and reflect the political confusion of a people who have lived in a fool's paradise for over 50 years. Only now are they realising the hard way that they were not 'masters', and the realisation is not a pleasant one. A commander of the UDA on the Shankill Road in Belfast is reported in a local evening paper as saying that if Stormont ever came back 'I hope there will be more labour men there.' He denied that the UDA was run by middle class elements and asserted that it was a 'working class'

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organisation. When queried about his attitude to Roman Catholics he said that no one expected that Stormont would 'return in the way that it was before.' He admitted that mistakes had been made in the past and thought that if the gun and bomb were taken out of politics 'we think that Protestants and Catholics could work it out together.' This affords the hope that, given peaceful conditions and the passage of time, the working class could indeed 'work it out together'. But there are other forces who do not want to see such a coming together. They see their future in a further polarisation of the working class and are willing to risk a sectarian civil war if they think it will be necessary to safeguard their political and financial interests.

Already demands have been made for the introduction of martial law. Mr Stokes, British Tory MP and English Catholic, stated on the BBC on July 13 that he wanted Whitelaw removed and someone like General Templar put in control of Northern Ireland. He instanced Templar's 'success' in Malaya and elsewhere and failed to see the irony of his suggestion in that Templar, military butcher that he was, was also removed because he failed to hold the countries that he had terrorised for the greater good of British imperialism. Stokes warned that Northern Ireland had to be taken strongly in hand otherwise urban guerrilla warfare would be exported to English cities, and expressed the opinion that Catholics (in Northern Ireland) had to 'make the best of life' inside the UK.

As the cities and towns of Northern Ireland are split up into 'no-go' areas for Protestant and Catholic working class alike, and the cease fire between the Provisional IRA and the British Army remains broken, there exists the probability of a civil war—Craig has spoken of action to be taken at the 'end of the summer'. The progressive forces have appealed to the Provisional IRA to end their military offensive. The reasons for the ending of the truce were understandable —it is difficult to withstand blatant provocation and to witness one's people being ejected from their homes and refused entry by the British Army to new homes legally allocated by the public housing authority at the behest of members of the UDA. It is very hard to witness the continued appeasement of right-wing Unionism, the open arming of the UDA, the erection of 'no-go' areas in Protestant ghettos with British troops looking on, the sectarian killings by hooded men, and to hear the calls by Craig and Co. for armed rebellion the object of which is to wipe out the Catholic population without any check from the so-called forces of 'law and order'. All this adds up to an apprehension that the British Tory Government would not be averse to civil war breaking out and making the 'croppies lie down'.

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In the end, the Tories would hope to pick up the mutilated pieces and proceed to put into action their overall strategy for the whole of Ireland—within the EEC, under British hegemony, and part of Nato, in the interests of British monopoly capitalism. The British Tories have not yet learned that one and one do not always make two.

Nevertheless, the bombing campaign must come to an end so that the political lessons can be learned and political solutions sought. A continuation of the military offensive by the Provisional IRA can only assist those who have a vested interest in further polarisation of the people and the unleashing of the paramilitary forces of reaction.

The task now, for all the progressive forces, is to link them together because, despite the assertion that the Unionists represent the majority of the people of Northern Ireland, the real majority is its working class—Protestant and Catholic—who, for different reasons, at this point in time, are rejecting the policies and links which created that spurious and unreal 'Unionist majority' and prevented a united working class from being able to oppose and defeat their class enemies, the Unionist lackeys and their masters, British imperialism.

Whitelaw has failed. The British Tory Government has failed—in its intentions to 'pacify' the people of Northern Ireland. The latter can only be satisfied when the democratic process begins to take shape and bear fruit. The adulation, 'support, sympathy and understanding' poured out for Whitelaw in the British House of Commons on July 10, by Members of all parties, finds no answering echo from the people here. Whitelaw is seen as another Faulkner or Craig—maybe more smooth and adept, and less inclined at the moment to 'order out the troops'—but these attributes are not of the stuff that will resolve the situation unless policies and political strategy are changed. It is more than time that the Labour Opposition in the British House ended their 'bipartisan policy' and changed their role from that of being lesser imperialists to putting forward a policy that corresponds to the best interests of the British working class whom they claim to lead. The danger exists, for Wilson and Co., that they will also be rejected, as are the British Tories, by the people of Northern Ireland —and the South. British Labour cannot any longer continue to hide behind a phoney sympathy for the lives of British troops—it is Tory policy in Northern Ireland that has put those lives in danger. When that policy is changed, then British and Irish lives will be safe.

The days that lie ahead will prove grim indeed. But not without the hope that is eternal to the working class—that that class will find a way towards unity based on matters of common interest and firmly united against the enemies of the British and Irish people.

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YOUNG WORKERS AND THE TUC

Phil Beyer
Chairman
Birmingham Trades Council Youth Committee

VIC FEATHER, General Secretary of the TUC, answering questions from the audience on Jimmy Saville's programme on BBC radio on Sunday, July 2, stated he did not see the need for an annual TUC youth conference. He went on to state his reason for this when Jimmy Saville challenged him. The three arguments he used were (1) that he did not believe in separate sections for women or young workers as these create division in the trade union movement and he wanted unity, (2) that there are adequate opportunities for young people to get involved in the unions, (3) that their problems as young workers are the same as all other workers and there are no particular ones affecting them.

This is a contradictory position to the one stated to a deputation he met at the 1970 TUC in Brighton from the young workers' lobby headed by Pete Kavanagh, Secretary of the Trade Union Youth Conference Committee. In the course of discussion Vic Feather said that the 350 young workers lobbying had demonstrated to him that young workers wanted a TUC annual youth conference, and that, whilst he supported it, it was necessary to get it raised in the correct way so that a resolution could be debated at a future TUC.

Ultimately the establishment of an annual TUC youth conference will be decided by the TUC which requires a motion to be on its agenda. Last year a motion got on to the preliminary agenda but was dropped on the final one. This year the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) has been committed from its recent conference to put as one of its two resolutions the demand for the annual TUC youth conference. This was unanimously adopted after being moved by Sheila Lahey.

The answer to Vic Feather's doubts, therefore, must be the complementary support from all delegates to the 1972 TUC, and backed up with prior resolutions to the General Council from union executives and trades councils, and secondly a big youth lobby on the opening day of the TUC, Monday, September 4, in Brighton.

Over the past three years unions making up a substantial majority of the total union membership have gone on record to support an

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annual TUC youth conference; this includes the Transport and General Workers' Union, Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW), National Union of Miners, Union of Post Office Workers, Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff, National and Local Government Officers' Association, Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs, National Society of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel (Natsopa), and also dozens of trades councils, including all the main ones, and just about every junior workers' committee, trades council youth section, and national youth committee.

For thirty-two years the Scottish TUC has had an annual Youth Conference and a Youth Committee. Amongst the speakers at its last conference in March, where over 100 young trade union delegates from throughout Scotland were present, was Jimmy Reid. He paid tribute to the role of young workers and the apprentice committees in the Upper Clyde shipyards during the period of the work-in, and also to other young workers throughout Scotland who had given support in many ways. Also in his remarks he stressed how important the role of the Scottish TUC Youth Conference was and wished it every success in its future work.

Janet Harkness in her speech to the 1970 TUC, having been presented with the first TUC Youth Award, said that, 'the young people out there today [the young workers' lobby] are asking you to extend your gratitude and allow them to come and have a congress through the TUC . . . they want to come and discuss the problems of youth . . . the young have something to say and I believe people should listen, for to turn your back is to lose the soul of the movement.'

Richard Briginshaw (Natsopa) then followed by saying: 'We ought not to be scared of the fact that we have been lobbied today. We ought to be proud that our youth are pressing us for a further innovation along the lines that the General Council are obviously giving consideration to, simply on the basis of the encouragement of youth.'

Tom Driver, General Secretary, of the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions, moving a successful motion from his union on industrial training, opened by referring to the TUC youth conference. 'When we came to this Congress on Monday we were met by a lot of young people asking that we should press for a congress of young trade unionists. If the General Council get around to the idea, as I hope they will, of such a conference, I am pretty certain that one of the items on the agenda will be the problem concerning opportunities for training of young workers.'

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Hugh Scanlon has on many occasions expressed his support for an annual TUC youth conference, and it is of course AUEW policy. At the 1971 AUEW (Engineering Section) Youth Conference, in discussion on a successful resolution reaffirming this position, he said that whilst the resolution in the terms stated was quite specific, it should not be taken to mean that in setting up some kind of machinery, this would solve all problems. It was the job of all concerned to convince Congress (the TUC) of the need to mobilise and inspire youth in organisational recruitment and policy machinery. The important feature was for youth to assist in recruitment, so that documents would be meaningful.

This statement justified the need for a TUC youth conference as there are over 3,000,000 young people at work unorganised. If in the early years of their working lives they experience long hours of work, low pay conditions, unemployment and lack of training opportunities, then unless the trade union is seen fighting on their behalf they will not be won as a whole to join and play an active part in the movement.

A youth conference of the TUC could help focus attention on the specific problems of young workers, and could formulate and articulate policy that would overcome the problem. Above all it could help engage the full resources of the whole trade union movement to campaign in an ambitious colourful and youthful way to recruit the 3,000,000 unorganised into the ranks and to develop ways of involving them so that they have a means to act on their own behalf with the full support of the adult movement.

All members of the trade union movement are asked to support the youth lobby* of this year's TUC by helping to elect and finance young workers to attend. This will encourage all TUC delegates to support the idea of an annual youth conference, and will help to place a resolution on the final agenda.

* Full details of the lobby are available from Pete Kavanagh, TUYCC Secretary, 27 Alberta Street, London, SE27.

March 1922 **August 1922** **October 1927** **March 1932**

What have these dates in common?
They are the months for which issues of *Labour Monthly* are the most difficult to find. These four issues would complete a set of volumes for sale at the *LM* office—and would be aid to our finances!

Any offers to: 134 Ballards Lane, London, N3 2PD

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DIMITROV CELEBRATION

Marie Pritt

IN the opening remarks of my speech at the Conference held in Sofia in June to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of Georgi Dimitrov, I said how I grieved that the sudden and quite unexpected death of my husband had denied him the happiness of participating in this important Conference. It would indeed have been a source of great happiness for him to witness delegates from 131 countries, of varying political thought, gathered together, not only to celebrate the birthday of this great son of Bulgaria, the man who made Goering impotent with rage, the man whose proud enunciation of his political faith in the face of his accusers stirred millions throughout the world and undoubtedly helped to enlighten millions to the real nature of fascism, but to discuss one of the political ideas which dominated the speeches and writings of Georgi Dimitrov, the need for unity among all progressive people in order to achieve socialism and peace.

Listening to the speeches of the delegates during the four days of the Conference, I realised for the first time the wide influence he had had throughout the world. And pondering over this, I recalled the meeting my husband and I had with him when we went to Bulgaria as his guests in 1948—just one year before he died. And in my speech I quoted words my husband had written when he was asked to give his impressions of Georgi Dimitrov as a man, soon after our visit:

> I found him simple and friendly, like most great men, with the inward dignity of the class from which he came, and with none of the false dignity of lesser statesmen. He is lively and jolly when the occasion warrants, solid and business-like with all the firmness that is called for at times in the stage of history. It was impossible not to sense the presence of a great man, and equally impossible to feel embarrassed by this natural and unassuming and human being.

I believe this Conference will have wide repercussions; the delegates will all have returned to their countries strengthened in their work for socialism and peace. For myself, the strain of going to the Conference so soon after my husband's death was very great, but I am glad I went.

Looking from the window of my hotel in the evenings, the square below was a soothing spectacle. On seats surrounding a clear stretch of water, which reflected the green of the trees, very young, young, middle aged and old people, citizens of the new Bulgaria forged under the hand of Dimitrov and his Party, looked a picture of confidence and tranquility which could not have been witnessed before the overthrow of fascism and the development of socialism in that sunny land.

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HO CHI MINH'S TESTAMENT

At this critical moment in the struggle of the Vietnam people we pay tribute to the memory of Ho Chi Minh with the publication of his Testament of 1969 which may not be well known to many of our readers.

EVEN though our people's struggle against US aggression, for national salvation, may have to go through more hardships and sacrifices, we are bound to win total victory.

This is a certainty.

I intend, when that comes, to tour both South and North to congratulate our heroic fellow-countrymen, cadres and combatants, and visit old people and our beloved youth and children.

Then, on behalf of our people, I will go to the fraternal countries of the socialist camp and friendly countries in the whole world and thank them for their wholehearted support and assistance to our people's patriotic struggle against US aggression.

Tu Fu, the famous poet of the Tang period in China, wrote: 'In all times, few are those who reach the age of seventy.'

This year, being seventy-nine, I can already count myself among those 'few'; still, my mind has remained perfectly lucid, though my health has somewhat declined in comparison with the last few years. When one has seen more than seventy Springs, health deteriorates with one's growing age. This is no wonder.

But who can say how much longer I shall be able to serve the revolution, the Fatherland and the people?

I therefore leave these few lines in anticipation of the day when I shall go and join Karl Marx, V. I. Lenin and other revolutionary elders; this way, our people throughout the country, our comrades in the Party, and our friends in the world will not be taken by surprise.

First about the Party: Thanks to its close unity and total dedication to the working class, the people and the Fatherland, our Party has been able, since its founding, to unite, organise and lead our people from success to success in a resolute struggle.

Unity is an extremely precious tradition of our Party and people. All comrades, from the Central Committee down to the branch, must preserve the unity and oneness of mind in the Party as the apple of their eye.

Within the Party, to establish broad democracy and to practise *self-criticism and criticism*, regularly and seriously, is the best way to consolidate and develop solidarity and unity. Comradely affection should prevail.

Ours is a Party in power. Each Party member, each cadre must be deeply imbued with *revolutionary morality*, and show industry, thrift, integrity, uprightness, total dedication to the public interest and complete selflessness. Our Party should preserve absolute purity and prove worthy of its role as the leader and very loyal servant of the people.

The Working Youth Union members and our young people in general are good; they are always ready to come forward, fearless of

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difficulties and eager for progress. The Party must foster their *revolutionary virtues* and train them to be our successors, both 'red' and 'expert', in the building of socialism.

The training and education of future revolutionary generations is of great importance and necessity.

Our labouring people, in the plains as in the mountains, have for generation after generation endured hardships, feudal and colonial oppression and exploitation; they have in addition experienced many years of war.

Yet, our people have shown great heroism, courage, enthusiasm and industriousness. They have always followed the Party since it came into being, with unqualified loyalty.

The Party must work out effective *plans* for economic and cultural development so as constantly to *improve the life of our people.*

The war of resistance against US aggression may drag on. Our people may have to face new sacrifices of life and property. Whatever happens, we must keep firm our resolve to fight the US aggressors till total victory.

> Our mountains will always be, our rivers will always be,
> our people will always be;
> The American invaders defeated, we will rebuild our land
> ten times more beautiful.

No matter what difficulties and hardships lie ahead, our people are sure of total victory. The US imperialists will certainly have to quit. Our Fatherland will certainly be reunified. Our fellow-countrymen in the South and in the North will certainly be reunited under the same roof. We, a small nation, will have earned the signal honour of defeating, through heroic struggle, two big imperialisms—the French and the American—and of making a worthy contribution to the world national liberation movement.

About the world communist movement: Being a man who has devoted his whole life to the revolution, the more proud I am of the growth of the international communist and workers' movement, the more pained I am by the current discord among the fraternal parties.

I hope that our Party will do its best to contribute effectively to the restoration of unity among the fraternal parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, in a way which conforms to both reason and sentiment.

I am firmly confident that the fraternal parties and countries will have to unite again.

About personal matters: All my life, I have served the Fatherland the revolution and the people with all my heart and strength. If I should now depart from this world, I would have nothing to regret, except not being able to serve longer and more.

When I am gone, a grand funeral should be avoided in order not to waste the people's time and money.

Finally, to the whole people, the whole Party, the whole army, to my nephews and nieces, the youth and children, I leave my boundless love.

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I also convey my cordial greetings to our comrades and friends, and to the youth and children throughout the world.

My ultimate wish is that our entire Party and people, closely joining their efforts, will build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Vietnam, and make a worthy contribution to the world revolution.

Ho Chi Minh
Hanoi, May 10, 1969

AUGUSTE BLANQUI

Senator Georges Cogniot

IN his report to the 21st Congress of the French Communist Party in 1947, Maurice Thorez declared in the name of the Party: 'We alone are the perpetuators of the finest traditions of France.' He added that the French communist movement 'derives its origin from the materialism of the philosophers of the eighteenth century, from Babeuf and from Cabet, from Saint-Simon, from Fourier and from Blanqui.'

It is clear that there is a great distance between the origins of a movement and its adult state, its state of full development and maturity. In partially attributing the communist movement of our days to Blanqui and Blanquism, Maurice Thorez was evidently making allusion to the role of Blanquism in the *birth* of the modern French working class movement, to the historic importance of the Socialist Party of France formed in 1901 by the fusion of Blanquist and Marxist organisations (Guesdist) and subsequently to the influence of Blanquist trends in the United Socialist Party which was created in 1905, from which trends the Communist Party had to dissociate itself in 1920. Maurice Thorez undoubtedly also wished to recall the moral significance of Blanqui's personal example; he admired the revolutionary energy, the indomitable heroism of this 'Titan of revolt' who struggled since the time of the restoration of the Bourbons until the days of the Paris Commune, who spent more than 33 years of his life in prison, who was respected and admired, as Bernstein tells us in a recently published book* (p. 301), in Marx's family. But Maurice Thorez did not fail to recognise the essential differences which separate Blanquism and the revolutionary workers movement of the twentieth century founded on Marxism-Leninism.

* *Auguste Blanqui and the Art of Insurrection*, Samuel Bernstein, Lawrence & Wishart, 364 pp., £4.

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The great merit of Samuel Bernstein's book is its balance and scientific impartiality: the author highlights both the particular negative features and historic limitations of Blanquism, and at the same time its great merits. Samuel Bernstein has for a long time been recognised as an extraordinarily well-informed historian of the French working class movement of the nineteenth century. His new work is a precious, an inestimable further contribution to understanding of the historic past of the French workers and the revolutionary action conducted in their name.

The conclusion to which Bernstein brings his reader is that, for the modern workers' movement, Blanquism in its totality is unacceptable —just as Engels has already shown—and that those writers who have clung to deification of Blanqui, or to identifying him with Marx, such as the former leading French Communist André Marty and the Trotskyist historian Maurice Dommanget, have fallen into error: 'The longer we enquire into Blanquism and Marxism the more superficial their resemblances appear' (p. 10).

How can one summarise in a few words the ideas of Blanqui? He thought that one must above all create a strongly disciplined and centralised organisation of revolutionaries, a cohesive and strictly hierarchical organisation, having for its objective the seizure of power at the first favourable occasion and the setting up of a revolutionary government which would put into effect immediate transformations towards equality, the social republic, communism.

This conception arouses sympathy and approval because of the importance it gives to the problem of the seizure of power, because of the central idea according to which the fundamental questions of the social-economic life of the people cannot be solved without a basic change from the irreconcilable interests of the exploiters and the exploited, and because of the interpretation of political power as the necessary *means* of delivering the people from the chains of slavery. The necessity of the conquest of power and of ensuring the management of the country by those who struggle against oppression, the indispensable union of the social movement with the political movement, these are always the governing ideas behind the action of the working class.

But Bernstein also underlines the negative aspects of Blanquism.

In the first place, *conspiracy* becomes the only form of political struggle, the alpha and omega of revolutionary action. It is the revolutionary *minority*, the *élite* formed essentially from certain declassed intellectuals, who, at a signal from their leadership, take up arms and unleash the revolutionary tornado, in the course of

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which the masses are carried away by its contagious influence into action, without responsibility and without consciousness:

> The élite neither took counsel with the people nor informed them in advance of its plans. The culminating stage, when all alike were exalted, would spell the triumph of equality. But until then, élite and people had to act on different levels, the one charting the course of the revolution, the other obediently falling into line (p. 64).

Insurrection does not then rest upon a revolutionary movement of the people as with Lenin (p. 87). Blanquism is voluntarist, just as there are today the left partisans of minority movements who rely utopianly on 'rousing the masses'.

In the second place, if Blanqui used effectively the words 'proletariat' and 'proletarian', he did not, however, represent the modern working class, and it is not on that class that he bases the movement of history. For him the 'proletariat' is the mass of workers, above all artisans, and the petty bourgeoisie: 'He did not look upon the working class as the principal motor of history' (p. 9). The two 'irreconcilable' classes of which he speaks are the oppressors on one hand, and on the other hand 'the aggregate force' of all the other social categories: 'His source of exploitation was interest and usury, and its principal victim the skilled, independent worker. He was also concerned with the factory workers, but his system of thought was not geared to them' (p. 200).

Blanquism therefore belongs to the pre-proletarian stage of the revolution: the appearance of the conditions necessary to the socialist revolution is not dependent on the degree of development of the economy and the class struggle, but considered outside concrete social relations. We are far from Marxism, for which the proletarian revolution is inconceivable without a relatively advanced level of capitalism. Socialist ideas become material forces when they put in movement the revolutionary element, but the influence of these ideas does not extend to the masses; the conception of the Party is not attached to the theory of classes and to the class struggle. Blanqui, as Engels said, is 'devoid of socialist theory' (p. 241).

Thirdly, all activity in favour of reforms is repudiated: 'Blanquist logic had it that any improvement of labour's situation was to be spurned, because it hindered revolution. The deeper the workers' misery and the more they hungered, the greater was the likelihood of their revolting' (p. 290). It is superfluous to insist on the anti-Marxist character of this thesis.

Fourthly, 'according to Blanqui's lights, the workers' immediate needs were secondary to the struggle against spiritualism' (p. 9).

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He believed in the 'propelling power of ideas' in history, 'and made atheism a central tenet.' In confusing the social question with the religious question, he turned attention away from the primordial problem (p. 274): 'The workers had to become materialists before they could be fired with emancipating wrath' (p. 291).

One understands that all these reasons, and above all the non-recognition of the historic mission of the modern working class and the necessity of the mass movement, caused Blanqui to adopt a somewhat surly reservation in regard to the First International even in 1868 and 1869, after the Congress of Brussels and the victory of the collectivists over the Proudhonists.

All these points are well highlighted by Bernstein throughout his lively and captivating biography of Auguste Blanqui.

If it is permissible to express some mild criticisms about an excellent book, we would regret that in correctly pointing out the confusion created by Blanqui between the proletariat and the mass of non-proletarian workers, the writer has not taken the opportunity to recall that, in Leninism, the more it is true that the advanced and revolutionary class is the modern working class, the more it matters that the party which represents this class understands that it must put itself at the head of the *entire* people and ensure the hegemony of the working class over the *mass* of workers, peasants, intellectuals, technicians, etc. . . . Blanquism is superseded and abolished, but the grains of truth it contained bear fruit.

Our second comment concerns the rapprochement that the author makes between Blanqui and Bakunin. He emphasises that both were partisans of conspiratorial methods, putting atheism in the foremost place, and even imitating it by a messianic nationalism. We believe however that the communist Blanqui and the anarchist Bakunin, essentially present more points of divergence than analogy, and that the Blanquists like Vaillant were not mistaken in supporting Marx against Bakunin at the Hague Congress in 1872. The true witness for Blanqui in Russia was to our knowledge Pyotr Tkachov, the creator of the 'Narodnaya Volia', interpreter of the interests of peasant democracy, who should have merited in our opinion more mention than one line in Bernstein's book*.

Such observations on details in no way detract from the high appreciation merited by this work of Samuel Bernstein's, which is so moving and enriching, packed with first hand documentation drawn from the manuscripts of *l'Enfermé*.

* cf. M. G. Sedov: *Quelques problemes de l'histoire du blanquisme en Russie*, in Voprossy Istorii, Moscow, 1971, No 10, pp. 39-54

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BOOKS

Ecology: Can We Survive Under Capitalism?
Gus Hall
International Publishers (Central Books), 96 pp., 60p

A BOOK ON ECOLOGY written by the general secretary of a political party is an event in itself, and I cannot recall another, not in this country anyway. But this stirring tract is written by the general secretary of the Communist Party of the United States of America, a tough and practical campaigner, as well as a principled political thinker of stature.

Ecology is a class issue, says Hall, showing that pollution and environmental deterioration are the result of the capitalist system in general, and the profit motives of the monopolies that run it, in the US in particular. He shows how the workers suffer most from pollution in bad housing, and produces some hair-raising facts about exploitation of workers in American mines and factories that would not be tolerated by factory inspectors in Britain let alone the trade unions. For example, there is no compensation for 'black lung' (pneumoconiosis) victims among the 30,000 miners of West Virginia. Hall shows that it is not the pollutor who pays, but the worker, for partial measures of cleaning air, water and disposing of effluent. Indeed the monopolists profit from such measures and pass the extra charges on to the consumers. Some bus companies put perfume into the fuel tanks of their vehicles in a cosmetic approach to pollution.

Interesting too is the exposure of the ecology demagogy of the Nixon-Agnew administration which tried to involve youth in meaningless movements. 'Youth quickly discovered collecting discarded cans and bottles, while not without merit, was not tackling the problem at its source.' He reveals how Nixon's famous State of the Union address about the environment was followed by bills that inserted seven key words into every law dealing with the environment. These are: 'taking into account the practicability of compliance.' These words made the new laws a farce, says Hall, by providing a loophole through which even the biggest pollutors can crawl. He shows however that the campaigners against pollution are learning the same lessons about the American system that was learned by peace campaigners—that the capitalist system becomes exposed and condemned in such activity.

The struggle for a decent environment is part of the struggle for peace and socialism, and only a socialist system can hope to end the horrors of pollution, waste, filth, degradation and ecological imbalance brought about by capitalism. He looks with confidence to the socialist countries, showing that there the tide has turned and the battle for a liveable environment is being won. Here he does not subscribe to the fashionable nonsense, which comes from the left too, that the socialist countries are just as backward in anti-pollution measures as the capitalist countries. He quotes many measures that are now beginning to bite.

At the same time, he puts forward a programme of immediate struggle against the pollutors. At a time when there are so many books about the effects of pollution, this one that explains so clearly its causes, and the root and branch cure of socialism is refreshingly welcome.

JOHN MOSS

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The Economics of Soviet Merchant-Shipping Policy
Robert E. Athay
North Carolina Press (Oxford University Press), 150 pp., £3.60

ALTHOUGH TOUGH-GOING for the lay reader, because of its mass of statistical material, the tabulated presentation of this material, much of which is not easily accessible elsewhere, makes this book a valuable book of reference for MPs, trade union officials, newspaper editors and other journalists in their consideration of the misleading and tendentious statements regarding the alleged 'threat to Britain's shipbuilding and shipping industries' of the maritime development of the USSR and regarding alleged 'unfair practices' involved therein.

It is of interest and value to the general reader also, however, because the author, an American research economist, basing himself on the statistics which he has amassed (largely from Soviet sources) has arrived at conclusions which confirm those voiced earlier by some people in this country regarding the absurdity of the allegations just mentioned, and that it is quite normal that the USSR has become one of the world's leading maritime powers.

He admits, but it is noteworthy that he does not decry it, that 'the growth of the merchant fleet has broadened the ability of the Soviet Union to act in the international political arena,' as, for instance, by the decisive use of that fleet to enable Cuba to survive the illegal US blockade, and by its generous services to other developing countries which would otherwise be more vulnerable than they complained of being—at the recent third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)—to pressure on their politics and economy by the neo-colonialist powers. Without attempting to take into account the 'political-military benefits' resulting from the foregoing, he argues, on purely economic grounds, that the Soviet merchant fleet is fully viable, and that the vast investment in it is a good one, from the Soviet Union's point of view.

The author concludes that it is unlikely that the Soviet merchant fleet, though scheduled to aggregate 22-23 million tons deadweight in 1980, will in the foreseeable future reach a proportion of more than six per cent of the total world tonnage; that it will be a very long time before it can reach its goal of carrying most, if not all, of its country's sea-borne trade; and that in the meanwhile the shipbuilders and the shipowners of the world, including those of the capitalist countries, can do good business with the USSR, if they go the right way about it.

EDGAR P. YOUNG

A Special Case?
Edited by John Hughes and Roy Moore
Penguin Books, 164 pp., 35p

THE CASE PRESENTED by the Miners' Union to the Wilberforce Tribunal has been made with the utmost clarity and with the novel idea of workers themselves giving authentic evidence to people who knew very little about the coal industry. The miners have always had a special case. From 1921-37, 60-70 per cent of the miners in South Wales were paid an allowance in addition to those earned under their agreements to bring them up to a subsistence level of wages. The whole history of the industry has been one of low wages, harsh and cruel conditions of labour. In fact in 1931 an independent chairman made an award granting the married three pence per day more than single men, and to married men with children six pence per day more. Compare this with the survey made recently by the

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BBC as to the value of a wife, assessed at £70 per week.

By all means present the special case at all times; for the miners the important thing is not that, but why the Wilberforce tribunal and the Government lent an ear on this occasion to it? The lessons to be learnt from this victory must be stated if we are to continue getting just results from our struggles as a class. DAI DAN EVANS

Lukács' Concept of Dialectics
I. Mészáros
Merlin, 212 pp., £2.50

THE AUTHOR presents this book as an interim stage in his work on Lukács, which is intended to lead up to a full scale biography. The volume contains an essay on Lukács, a forty-page biographical section and a very full bibliography.

The essay must indeed be read as an *introduction* to Lukács rather than an assessment: for it makes practically no reference to the ideological context of Lukács's work. If—as Mészáros would surely claim—Lukács has made an important contribution *to Marxism*, some estimation should be made firstly of the state of Marxist philosophy when Lukács wrote, and secondly of the reactions of other Marxists to Lukács. For example the author brushes off the relationship of Lukács to neo-Kantianism by the argument that Lukács 'assimilated neo-Kantian influences in his own way' to form a new synthesis (p. 30): which is no doubt true, but this does not clear up the question of whether or not in 1924 Lukács's writings *objectively* represented a neo-Kantian position within Marxism.

A consequence—or possibly a cause—of this is the author's contemptuous attitude towards Lukács's critics within the international Communist movement, whose arguments he never mentions—except that readers with good eyesight and a knowledge of German can read the first page of section 4 of Rudas's attack from plate XXXIV.

Unfortunately this attitude not only distorts the role of the young Lukács; it conceals the very real contributions of Lukács's later work. For example, the relevance to Marxist thought of Lukács's development of the concept of totality is not discussed concretely.

It is to be hoped that Mészáros's full biography will cover these questions. Until then this volume will be an important work of reference for all those interested in serious study of Lukács. TONY DODD

Manley and the New Jamaica: Selected Speeches and Writings 1938-1968
Edited by Rex Nettleford
Longmans, 394 pp., £2.75

THE FIRST THING to notice is that this book does not refer to the Prime Minister of Jamaica and the Government he has been leading since early 1972. Norman Washington Manley's speeches will certainly not go down in history—notwithstanding his erudition and brilliancy as an advocate. The contents of Manley's speeches were very much of the same degree of shallowness that a typical legal advocate offers when there is no meat in his case—either for the prosecution or for the defence. At the time of making the speech however, all of us have been entranced with the histrionics of the actor or the advocate at the height of his act, but on reflection we soon appreciate the distinction between the shell and the core.

To think that a politician between 1938 and 1968 finds no occasion to mention the name of Cheddi Jagan from Guyana in the context of Caribbean politics is amazing. Perhaps

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even worse to note, the omission of a name like Ferdinand Smith, a contemporary of Manley's in Jamaica, is scandalous—but it is a measure of the man. The editor, Nettleford, can do nothing to gild the lily although that would appear to be his aim. We can only hope that when Manley the son, the present Prime Minister, has his speeches published they will record a real enrichment in the lives of Jamaicans in the setting of the beautiful Caribbean. B.S.

Communism and Human Values
Maurice Cornforth
Lawrence & Wishart, 72 pp., 50p

THIS SHORT BOOK is compiled from some of the later chapters of the author's larger work, *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*.

Cornforth, ending on the question of morality, states that 'until all exploitation of man by man is ended, morality cannot be based on a point of view and interest, but only on a class standpoint. . . . The morality of scientific socialism and communism is class-biased and militant,' calling to the working classes of the world to overcome the conditions of exploitation of man by man, and so emancipate the whole of humanity.

Many important questions, besides that of morality, are dealt with and, especially for the younger generation fighting against US atrocities in Vietnam, super-exploitation of the majority in southern Africa, and people being regarded as objects, whether as sexual objects or more broadly as 'means to ends' rather than as 'ends in themselves', it provides very good explanations. As Cornforth points out: 'The principal ideological alienation effect of private property consists of thinking of people as means and of objects and institutions as ends. . . . It means subordinating living people, who feel and think, to material things and social institutions which do neither.' Marx described the basis of this as the 'fetishism of commodities'.

Other questions of concern, such as religion, freedom and the 'prime necessity of life' (work) are tackled with a remarkable degree of precision, clarity, feeling and comprehensiveness to be contained in only 72 pages.

BRIAN FILLING

Karl Marx
Werner Blumenberg
NLB, 196 pp., £2.50

THIS BOOK sets out to reveal the 'real' Marx, the man behind the 'ism', especially his weaknesses and human frailties. Given this priority, discussion of Marx's real contribution as thinker and great revolutionary—the essence of the 'real' Marx—are superficial and sketchy in the extreme. Decisive areas of Marx's thought—political economy, historical materialism, the state, the revolutionary role of the working class—are not really discussed at all. Where attempts are made to deal with some of Marx's ideas and political activities, Blumenberg, it seems to me, either misses the point, gets it wrong, or rehashes old distortions (Marx's 'determinism'; Marx and Lassalle, Bakunin the early German Social-Democratic Party and its leaders; Marx and the 'mythologising' of the Paris Commune; Marx and 'social revolution' in Russia, etc., etc.).

Apart from some long and interesting excerpts from letters exchanged between Marx's father and his student son, and from the excellent pictures and reproductions, there is little that is new or original in this book. The poverty and terrible personal tragedies of Marx's life, vividly and compassionately though retold here, have been described before. So have the allegations and 'revelations' of personal failings—'dictatorialness', anti-semitism, cavalier treatment of people,

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mercenariness, his fathering of a son born to the family companion, Helene Demuth, etc. Much is made of Marx's 'thoroughly bourgois' attitude to his family, to the upbringing of his daughters and to their various suitors. Some of the failings mentioned above are true. Others have to be placed in the context of time, place and circumstance. All have to be considered within the framework not only of the frightful conditions in which Marx lived and worked, but, above all, in that of the 'whole' Marx, i.e. Marx the thinker, fighter and revolutionary.

Marx will be remembered for what is really important about him—his sacrifices, his work, his great and seminal contribution to elaborating the theory and practice of the working class struggle for socialism.

JACK COHEN

Poland: Phoenix in the East
William Woods
Penguin, 202 pp., 40p

THERE IS MUCH that is poignant and much of great value in this little survey of Poland today, and a reviewer necessarily restricted to a few brief comments is bound to note the mass of material, the interest, and the commitment of the writer, and his enthusiasm for the achievements of a people engaged in transforming their country.

The German invasion, the concentration camps at Maidenek and Auschwitz, the physical horrors suffered by this proud and gallant people; the divided command of the resistance forces during the war—centred in London and Moscow—unco-ordinated and pursuing different strategies, the coldblooded planned destruction of Warsaw carried out by the Nazis as they retreated—these things are vividly treated.

The writer expresses deep confidence in Poland's future. Her agriculture is shown to have problems still, but the advance in industry is massive and impressive. To give one instance: this country, land-locked, and without a sea coast for a century-and-a-half, had by 1960 reached fifth place in the world for the number of ships launched in its shipbuilding yards. The relations between church and state, thanks especially to the tolerance and understanding of the Government, are continually improving. This country, where in 1939 one in three was illiterate, now produces each year 6,500 new books with a total print of 110 million copies, four for every man, woman and child in the land.

When one remembers that Prussian Junkerdom and Russian tzars combined to wipe Poland off the map for a century-and-a-half, and that Hitler planned to murder half the population and enslave the rest, the fear and suspicion of Western Germany becomes understandable, and the indissoluble alliance with Soviet Russia (in spite of nationalist suspicions of Russia which are a hangover of the same past, and too of the Stalinist period) is universally acceptable even among the very large proportion of the population who are catholics.

It would have been possible to criticise much in this book: it is not the work of a Marxist, nor of one who has much sympathy with the communist movement: this in fact makes his frequent admissions of the wisdom and sincerity of the communists, sometimes grudgingly made, more impressive.

BEN AINLEY

Scottish Marxist
Scottish Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain, 74 pp., 25p

THE FIRST ISSUE of this new quarterly journal contains articles by leading Scottish Marxists, and includes Jimmy Reid's rectorial address at Glasgow University in April 1972.

O.C.

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LIFELONG GUARANTOR

THERE is a long tradition of acknowledging donations to *LM*'s fund, giving donors' names, pseudonyms or initials as requested by the donors themselves. In early years the acknowledgements were for donations to the 'Development Fund', and were made, not in every issue, but once every few months. After February 1940 (where I have been delighted to note a donation of 10s from E. R. Seyd) the acknowledgements became a monthly feature.

I discovered this when looking through the 1940 volume to find the earliest donation from RFB, whose name as a guarantor has been listed regularly through all these years. It is sad to record here the loss of this most long-standing of our supporters. His donation of £1 appeared in the issue of April 1940, and his last donation of £5 was acknowledged in our July issue this year.

It is impossible to speak of 'replacing' the loss to *LM* and to the whole movement of an individual whose reliability has stood the test of so many years. What can be looked for is replacement of his contribution to our fund. One promise of a new regular donation has just reached us, and we hope others will follow and help to fill RFB's place.

The total recorded here—only just short of our £100 target—is a wonderful boost in the middle of the holiday season. With the high level of trade union action, and increasing understanding of the political demands of the moment, comes the need to maintain *LM*'s fund of analysis and discussion, and that means maintaining *LM*'s fund.

Nicola Seyd

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The Life of Ernest Shatalov, Vladimir Amlinsky. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 210 pp., 30p.

Southeast Asia, V. A. Zharov and others. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 276 pp., 60p.

Workers' Attitudes and Technology, Dorothy Wedderburn and Rosemary Crompton. Cambridge University Press, 176 pp., £1.40.

British Capitalism, Workers and the Profits Squeeze, Andrew Glyn and Bob Sutcliffe. Penguin, 286 pp., 55p.

Rhodesia: The Struggle for a Birthright, Eshmael Mlambo. Hurst, 334 pp., £2.95.

Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism, Marx, Engels and Lenin. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 388 pp., 90p.

Contracts of Employment and the IR Act, Labour Research Department, 8 pp., 5p.

Scottish Marxist, Scottish Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain, 74 pp., 25p.

Who is the Principal Enemy?, Anders Boserup. Independent Labour Party, 30 pp., 20p.

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